

# (12) UK Patent Application (19) GB (11) 2 363 081 (13) A

(43) Date of A Publication 12.12.2001

(21) Application No 0014010.3

(22) Date of Filing 08.06.2000

(71) Applicant(s)  
New Media Works Ltd  
(Incorporated in the Channel Islands)  
PO BOX 618, Suite 5 Block A, Hürzel Court,  
St Peter Port, GUERNSEY, GY1 4PG, Channel Islands

(72) Inventor(s)  
Kevin Parker  
Michael Mainelli  
Jeremy Smith  
Ian Harris

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service  
Boult Wade Tennant  
Verulam Gardens, 70 Gray's Inn Road, LONDON,  
WC1X 8BT, United Kingdom

(51) INT CL<sup>7</sup>  
A63F 13/10, G06F 19/00

(52) UK CL (Edition S )  
A6H HLM

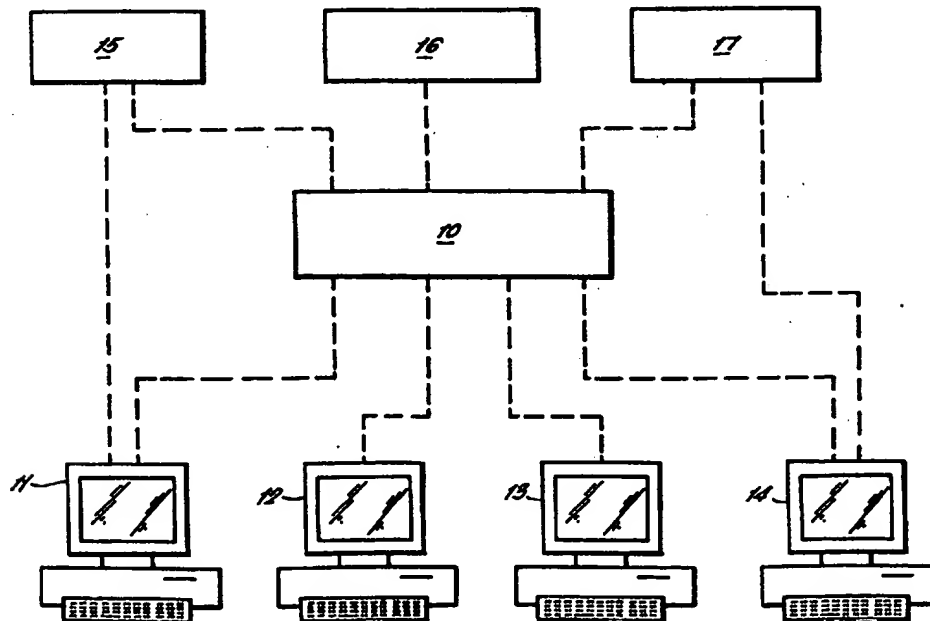
(56) Documents Cited  
US 5890963 A

(58) Field of Search  
UK CL (Edition R ) A6H HHM HLM  
INT CL<sup>7</sup> A63H 3/00  
ONLINE: EPODOC JAPIO WPI

(54) Abstract Title  
**Apparatus for playing a game**

(57) The present invention relates to (with reference to Figure 1) apparatus for playing a game. Each player of the game uses a personal computer (11, 12, 13, 14) to access via the Internet a game server (10) and to buy and sell shares in a number of entities each of which has a website hosted on one of a plurality of servers (15, 16, 17). The game server (10) has means for monitoring popularity of the websites hosted by the servers (15, 16, 17), the popularity of each website being determined by the number of hits on the website in a certain time period. The value of dividends paid in respect of shares in an entity is calculated from the popularity of the website associated with the entity.

FIG. 1.



GB 2 363 081 A

FIG. 1.

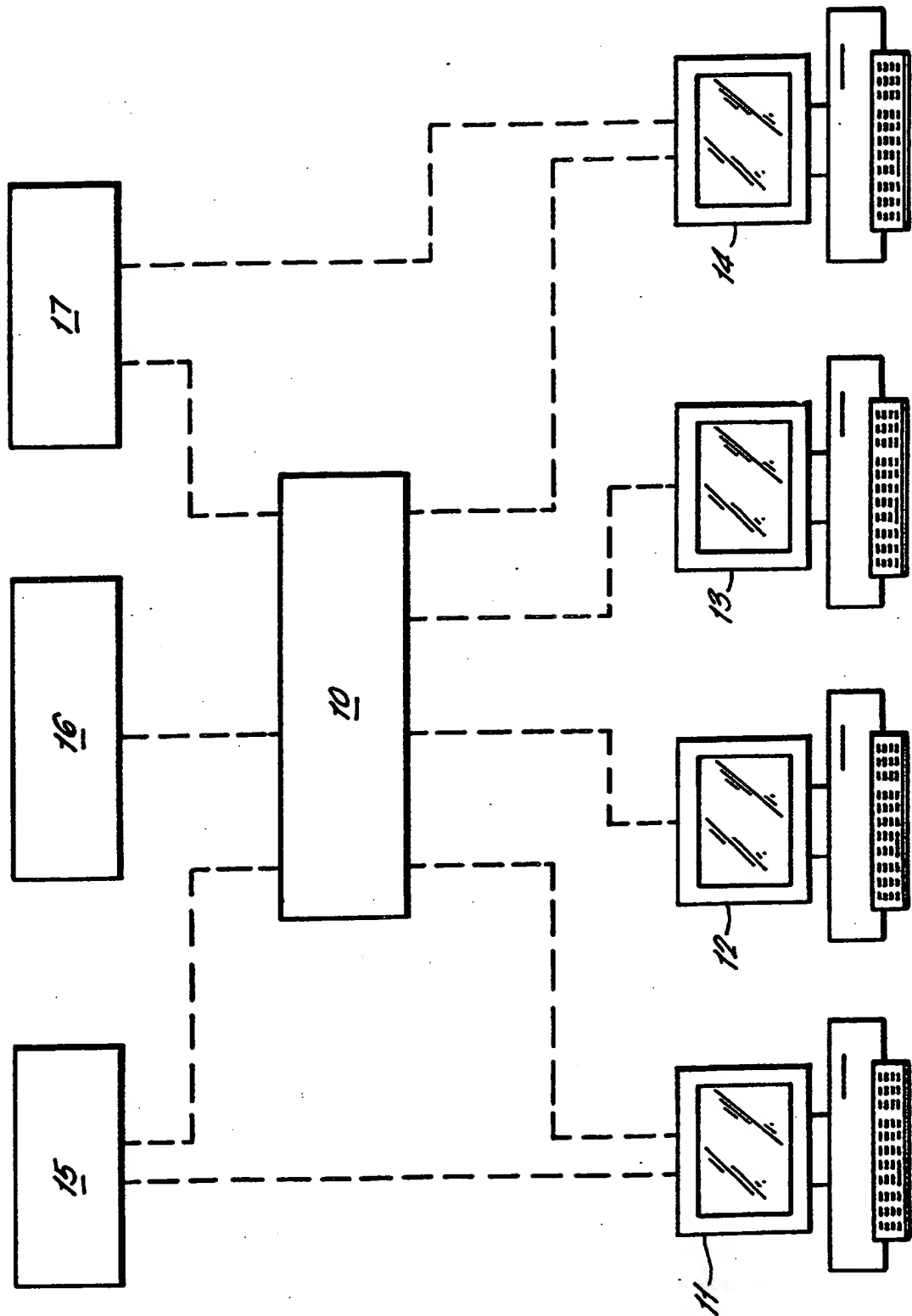


FIG. 2. FATCAT ZILLIONAIRE - GAME OVERVIEW

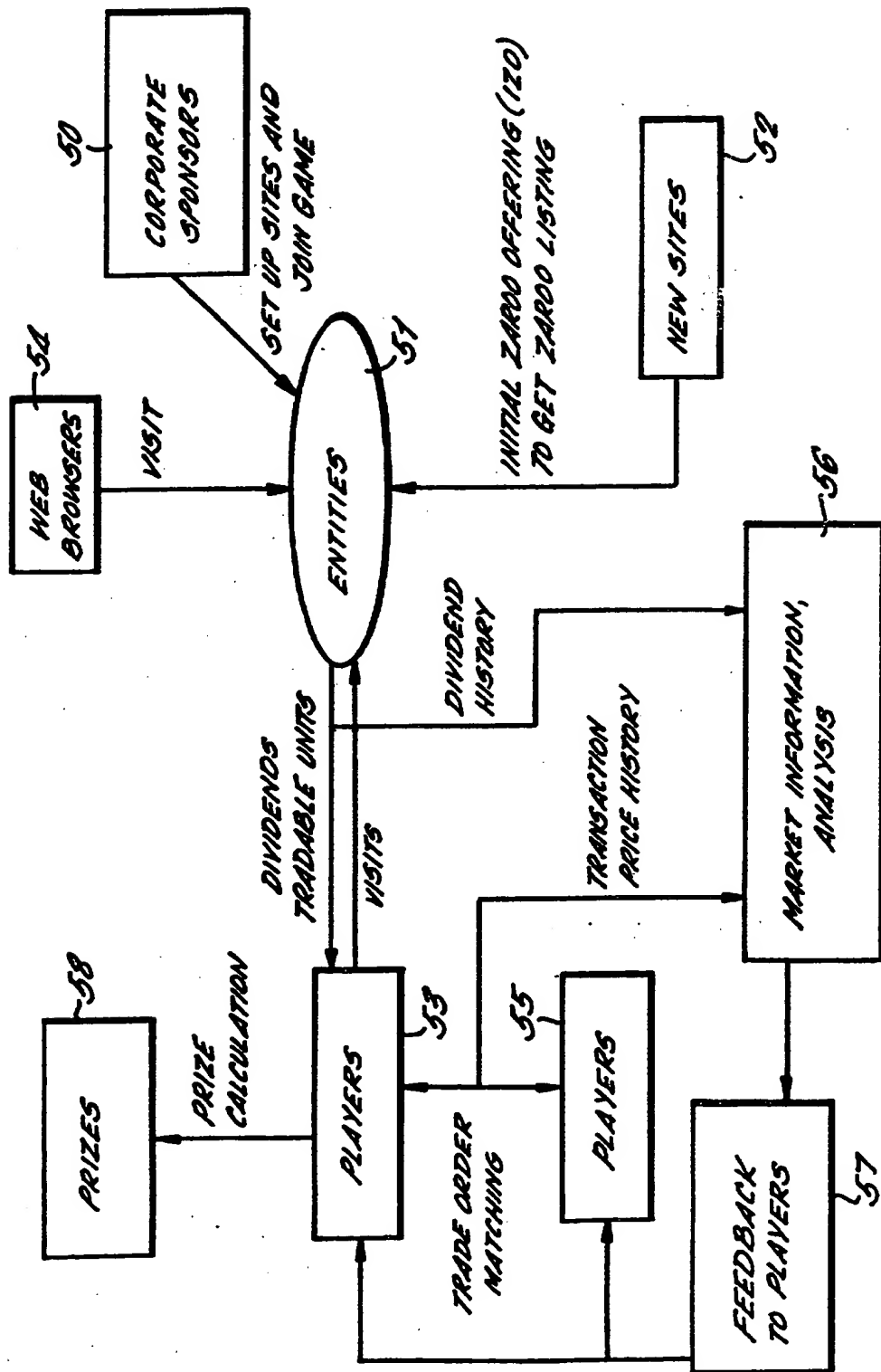
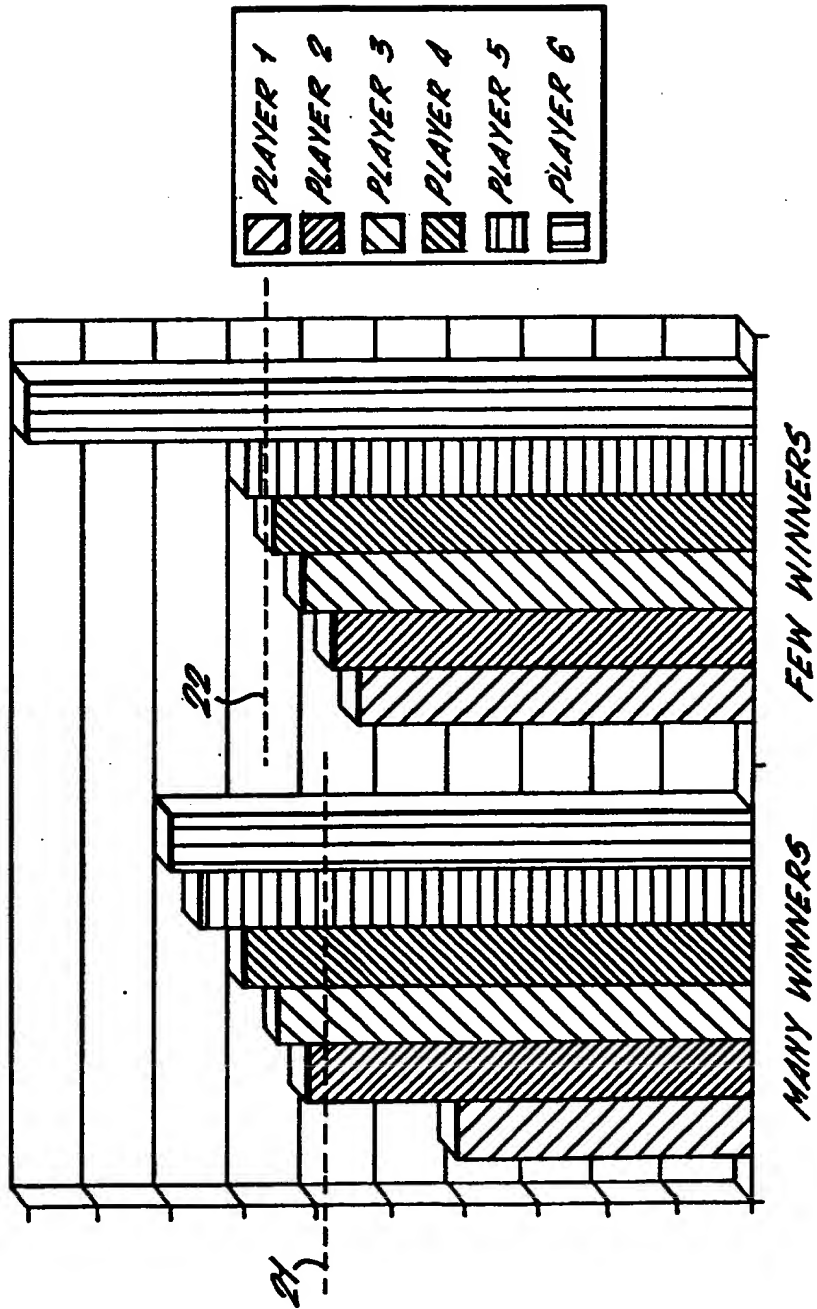


FIG. 3. MECHANICS OF PRIZE GIVING

THRESHOLD SET AS % OF HIGHEST SCORE



- 1 -

## APPARATUS FOR PLAYING A GAME

The present invention relates to apparatus for playing a game using the Internet.

5

In the past computer games have been made available which seek to emulate the functioning of the Stock Market and which enable players to play at investing in stocks and shares without financial risk in doing so. The difficulty faced in creating such an emulation game is to provide a degree of realism. Some games have sought to use real stock market statistics, but this involves the problem of data collection and also involves the problem that the Stock Market created in the game is not self-contained; the model Stock Market is not influenced by the buying and selling decisions of the players and there is thus game play is compromised. There can also be legislative problems in using real information, because certain territories keep this facility as the exclusive preserve of their authorised Stock Markets or authorised information providers may not permit secondary gaming based on a real market.

25

The present invention provides apparatus for playing a game comprising:

first computer processing means for processing data, the first computer processing means being connected to a telecommunications network to send and receive data via the telecommunications network to and from a plurality of remotely located computer processing means, wherein:

the first computer processing means stores game data regarding a plurality of entities, each of the entities having publicity data stored in a publicly

35

accessible site the stored data being freely  
accessible via the telecommunications network;

the first computer processing means ascribes to  
each entity a plurality of shares, which shares can be  
5 traded during the playing of the game, information  
regarding the number of issued shares for each entity  
being stored as game data by the first computer  
processing means;

each player uses one of the plurality of remotely  
10 located computer processing means to play the game  
with the remotely located computer processing means  
communicating via the telecommunications network with  
the first computer processing means;

when a player first plays the game, the first  
15 computer processing means allocates to the player a  
plurality of tradable units, which tradable units can  
be used by the player to buy and sell shares  
throughout the game, and the first computer means  
stores data regarding the tradable units holding of  
20 each player;

the first computer processing means receives via  
the telecommunications network from computer  
processing means of the plurality of remotely located  
computer processing means requests of the players to  
25 buy and sell shares in the entities, the shares being  
bought in exchange for the tradable units, and the  
first computer processing means processes the trades  
which are made, records a value for the traded shares  
in terms of tradable units, records changes of  
30 ownership of the shares amongst the players and  
records changes in holdings of tradable units amongst  
the players;

the first computer processing means has

monitoring means for monitoring popularity of the publicly accessible sites of the entities, the popularity of a publicly accessible site being calculated as a function of how many times the data in the publicly accessible site is accessed;

the first computer processing means calculates periodically for each entity a dividend in terms of a number of tradable units, the dividend value being calculated as a function of the calculated popularity of the publicly accessible site of the entity;

the first computer processing means for each entity divides the calculated dividend amongst the shares issued for the entity by adding tradable units to the tradable units holdings of the players holding the shares in the entity; and

the first computer means calculates for each player a value of aggregate holdings as an aggregate of the value of holdings of stocks and holdings of tradable units and periodically the first computer means compares the values of the holdings of the players and declares one or more winners for the relevant time period from calculations based on values of the aggregate holdings of the players.

A preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic illustration of apparatus according to the present invention;

Figure 2 is a flow diagram of the method of game play facilitated by apparatus according to the present invention; and

Figure 3 is a chart illustrating how prizes can

be distributed.

5       The apparatus of the present invention facilitates the playing of an investment game played over the Internet.

10       Figure 1 is a schematic illustration of one embodiment of apparatus according to the invention. A game server 10 is connected to the Internet. It hosts a website. The website is a website used by players for playing a game. The game server 10 can be accessed via the Internet by players of the game. Some personal computers 11, 12, 13, 14 are illustrated in Figure 1. Web browser software installed on the  
15       personal computers will enable players to access the website stored on the host game server 10.

20       When a player using a personal computer (e.g. 11) first accesses the website hosted on the server 10, the player will be given a password and an account. The account will contain a set number of initial tradable units (tradable units functioning as currency for the purpose of the game).

25       In the game, players will have the opportunity to buy and sell shares in entities. The shares are not real shares, but are shares used for the purposes of the game. The entities for the purposes of the game are trading companies or individuals having websites,  
30       e.g. actual websites of the trading companies or individuals. The shares will be traded on a matched bargain basis, i.e. for every buyer there must be a seller or a sale must be made with a central counterpart or market maker.

35



The dotted lines in Figure 1 represent a telecommunications network, the Internet in the preferred embodiment. The game server 10 can receive and send via the Internet data from and to the plurality of remotely-located personal computers 11-14 and website servers 15, 16 and 17. It will be appreciated that the illustration is very simplified and in reality there could be thousands of players.

The game server 10 will have a database which stores game data regarding a plurality of entities. Each of the entities will have publicity data stored in a website hosted by one of the web servers 15, 16 and 17. The websites on the host services 15, 16 and 17 are freely accessible via the Internet. It will be appreciated that the illustration is very simplified and in reality there could be hundreds or thousands of websites on hundreds or thousands of servers all recorded as entities by the database on the game server 10.

The software running on the game server 10 will ascribe to each entity a plurality of shares. The shares can be traded by the players during the playing of the game. Information regarding the number of shares ascribe for each entity will be scored in a database on the server 10.

The value of the traded shares is calculated from the trading in the shares. The share price will be agreed on a bargain basis, the buyer and seller agreeing the price. The game server 10 processes each buying and selling transaction. For instance, if a first player buys shares owned by the second player, then the game server 10 will reduce the tradable units

(i.e. currency) in the account of the first player and will increase by the same amount the number of tradable units in the account of the second player. The game server 10 will also record that the ownership of the shares in the entity has passed from the second player to the first player. The sale price agreed between the buyer and the seller is also recorded by the game server 10 and used on an ongoing basis to calculate a share price which is then displayed for all players to see.

The websites on the servers 15, 16 and 17 will be websites of sponsors or of players of the game. The sponsors will nominate all or part of a website as an entity. The website or the part of the website will incorporate an HTML link to and from the game server 10. This will probably be facilitated by incorporating or featuring a logo indicative of the game somewhere in the website. As the part of the website which incorporates the logo is downloaded by anybody using the Internet then the HTML link will cause a signal to be sent to the game server 10 indicating that somebody has "hit" the website (or part of the website), in other words somebody has accessed the publicity data which incorporates the HTML code. The HTML code may also operate to provide the game server 10 with information regarding the duration of each "hit", in other words the duration of access to the publicity data.

30

The game server 10 calculates dividends. The dividend is calculated in terms of tradable units as a function of popularity of the website of the entity. The dividend payable for an entity is calculated by a formula such as the following:

35

Dividend = log<sub>e</sub> of ("hits" per day) x (average duration of stay in seconds)

The dividend calculated for each entity will be divided by the number of shares in circulation. The  
5 database of the game server 10 will have a record of the number of shares in circulation and the computer software running on the game server 10 will carry out the division. The divided dividend will give a value (in tradable units) to be allocated to each share.  
10 Since the computer database on the game server 10 records which of the players owns relevant shares, it can distribute the dividend accordingly, increasing in value the relevant players' accounts.

15 In a more sophisticated version measures could be taken to avoid "inflation" and the consequent reduction in the value of each tradable unit. This could be done by putting a limit on the overall number of tradable units issued e.g. each day as dividends  
20 and by using the valuation calculated by the algorithm above to calculate how the total number of tradable units issued as dividends should be allocated between the traded entities.

25 It is possible for players to act as Internet entrepreneurs and establish their own websites which could then be traded as entities. There could be public flotations of new websites during the game.

30 The database on the game server 10 will have to be a large and extendable database. It is preferable that it records historical information regarding the value of each entity calculated from the value of its shares and also historical information regarding  
35 dividends paid. This historical information will be

made available to the players.

Prizes will be awarded periodically to players of the game. The prize awarded to each leading player will be the right to convert his/her accumulated tradable units into real currency. This right will be given to all players having holdings above a certain threshold value. The game server will, for each player, calculate an aggregate value of his/her holdings, this being the aggregate of the value of the shares held and also the number of tradable units in his/her account. This information will be made available to each player continuously as he/she plays the game.

In a preferred arrangement the threshold value for the awarding of prizes is calculated as a percentage of the aggregate value of the leading players' holdings. Each player will be able, on a continuous basis, to discover how his/her holdings compare in percentage terms with those of the leading player at the time. Of course, all identities will be kept secret. Alternatively, players could be asked to give pseudonyms and then tables could be prepared ranking the player by the values of their holdings.

Figure 3 gives an illustration of how the number of winners can vary using this method. The six columns in each half of the chart illustrate the value of the holdings of the players (1 to 6). The two lines 21 and 22 illustrate threshold values in two different scenarios. In the first scenario, five out of the six players are winners. In the second

scenario, only two players are winners. The total amount of prize money will be split between the winning players based upon the relative values of their holdings.

5

After a player has collected his winnings then the players' holdings will be reduced to a level comparable to the average level of holdings of all the players.

10

In an additional, or alternative scheme, a prize can be awarded to a player who in any given time period increases the value of his holdings to the greatest extent in percentage terms, perhaps above a minimum threshold.

15

Figure 2 gives a schematic illustration of how a game is played according to the present invention. The diagram is a flow chart rather than a representation of the apparatus.

20

Corporate sponsors 50 will set up websites and will enter them as entities 51 in the game. Internet entrepreneurs can create new websites 52 and aim to "float them" in the game as entities 51. The entities 51, which are websites or parts of websites will be accessed both by players, e.g. the players 53, or generally by users of the Internet using their web browsers 54. The popularity of the websites/entities 51 will lead to a calculation of dividends which are paid to players, e.g. the players 53. At the same time players 53 will be trading with other players 55 and will be buying and selling shares in the entities 51. The computer program will match requests to buy shares with offers to sell. The history of the

30

35

transaction price will be recorded as data along with history of the dividends paid. This information will be stored as market information and analysis at 56 and this information will then be used to provide feedback information 57 which is used by the players 53 and 55 when deciding whether or not to buy shares in the entities 51.

The aggregate holdings of the players 53 and 55 (these being the aggregate of the value of their stock holdings and also the value of their accounts of tradable units) will be monitored and periodically prizes 58 will be calculated in the manner described above.

Whilst in the embodiment described above the information regarding popularity of the websites/entities is provided directly from the websites of the traded entities to the website on the game server 10, it is envisaged that this information could be provided by the websites of the entities through an intermediate tracker and then the game server 10 would access the intermediate tracker server and obtain therefrom details regarding the number of hits on a particular entity website and the duration of the hits. Examples of website popularity trackers can be found at [www.freestats.com](http://www.freestats.com), [www.sitetracker.com](http://www.sitetracker.com), [www.websidestory.com](http://www.websidestory.com) and [www.webtrends.com](http://www.webtrends.com). Also [doubleclick.com](http://doubleclick.com) can provide a tracking service.

Whilst above one example of an algorithm to track website popularity has been given, numerous other algorithms are possible. It is known that any of the following can be monitored in respect of each website hit:

- a) referring domain;
- b) keywords used by search engine;
- c) country of website visitor;
- d) time of day of hit;
- 5 e) day of week of hit;
- f) referring web;
- g) host or Internet Service Provider used by visitor;
- h) web browser software used by visitor;
- 10 i) operating system used by visitor on personal computer;
- j) compatibility of visitor's computer setup with Javascripts;
- k) duration of stay on any particular page of a website;
- 15 l) resolution and colour capability of the screen of the computer used by the website.

20 An algorithm used to calculate popularity could use any of the above-noted parameters, e.g. to calculate popularity of a website with English visitors, or popularity of a website during June, etc.

25 It is envisaged that an algorithm measuring website popularity could count only visits during which an entire page of the website is downloaded. Alternatively, the popularity could be judged as a function of the product of the total number of hits and a percentage calculated from the average number of  
30 visitors (e.g. in a sample time period) who completely download a complete page.

The popularity of a website could be established as a number indicating a comparison of the number of  
35 hits on the website with an average number of hits

calculated from data from all the websites. The indicator could be e.g. 10% above a mean number, 10% below, etc. Such a calculation could be on a logarithmic scale.

5

Popularity measuring could give different weightings to different types of hits, e.g. weighting in favour of hits through a particular Internet Service Provider, or in favour of hits made by game players, in favour of hits from particular countries or in favour of hits made during peak hours.

10

A ranking algorithm could be used as the popularity algorithm, which generates points based upon where a website ranks in order of popularity calculated from a number of hits. The ranking exercise could be conducted for different time period slots, so that e.g a number 1 ranking for the 2.00 a.m to 3.00 a.m. slot receives less points than a number 1 ranking in a peak time period.

15

20

Whilst in the embodiments mentioned above the popularity of a website is calculated based on the total number of hits of all comers to the website, the popularity could be calculated as a function of solely the number of hits on a website made by game players. Software used by the game players could monitor the websites accessed by the game player and this information could be provided to the game server from the personal computers of the game players.

25

30

It is envisaged in an advanced version of the game the tradable units in the game could be linked in some way to other electronic trade currencies (e.g. Beenz [Trade Mark]). The other electronic trade

35



currency could be converted into the tradable units used in the game.

5       The corporate sponsors 50 could be charged with fees calculated upon their website popularity. The entities 51 could be categorised by size, nature of commercial activity and educational content in order to give different listings to assist the players in their analysis.

10

      The game could comprise news/information published on the website of the host server 10 regarding new entities as well as buy and sell tips (perhaps provided by a real Internet analyst).  
15   The players could be split by age group and prizes awarded per age group.

      It would be available to the sponsors 50 to devise schemes whereby players could use their  
20   tradable units to obtain discounts off goods or services provided by the sponsors 50.

      It is possible that players of the game could additionally be randomly awarded prizes in order to  
25   keep the interest of a large number of players.

      Whilst above one server 10 is described as running all software used in the game, it is envisaged that the server 10 could be replaced by two or more  
30   servers each running different software which collectively support the software required to run the game. For instance, all of the trading of shares and calculation of share values could be conducted on a server located remotely from a server which hosts the  
35   game website and receives requests for the players,

the two remotely located servers communicating with each other via a telecommunications link.

5        Whilst above the entities are websites of trading  
companies or individuals, the publicly accessible  
sites would vary in different versions of games. For  
instances, one version of the game could concern the  
music industry and each publicly accessible site would  
be a site of a musical group or a solo artist or a  
10      page of a musical group or a solo artist in a website  
of the record company of the group or artists. Players  
would obtain and trade shares in a group or artist and  
the popularity of the group or artist would be  
monitored. In this version popularity could be judged  
15      by how many times music files of each group or artist  
are downloaded for playing. In a further version of  
the game the publicly accessible sits could be those  
of cartoon characters. The players would obtain and  
trade shares in the cartoon characters. Popularity  
20      could be measured by the number of times collectable  
certificates were downloaded from the cartoon  
character sites.

25      Whilst above it is envisaged that the publicly  
accessible sites will be websites hosted on a  
plurality of remotely located servers, it is possible  
that the websites could all be hosted on the game  
server 10 (or one of two or more servers performing  
the function of the game server 10).

30

CLAIMS:

1. Apparatus for playing a game comprising:

first computer processing means for processing data, the first computer processing means being  
5 connected to a telecommunications network to send and receive data via the telecommunications network to and from a plurality of remotely located computer processing means, wherein:

10 the first computer processing means stores game data regarding a plurality of entities, each of the entities having data stored in a publicly accessible site, the stored data being freely accessible via the telecommunications network;

15 the first computer processing means ascribes to each entity a plurality of shares, which shares can be traded during the playing of the game, information regarding the number of issued shares for each entity being stored as game data by the first computer processing means;

20 each player uses one of the plurality of remotely located computer processing means to play the game with the remotely located computer processing means communicating via the telecommunications network with the first computer processing means;

25 when a player first plays the game, the first computer processing means allocates to the player a plurality of tradable units, which tradable units can be used by the player to buy and sell shares throughout the game, and the first computer means  
30 stores data regarding the tradable units holding of each player;

the first computer processing means receives via

the telecommunications network from computer processing means of the plurality of remotely located computer processing means requests of the players to buy and sell shares in the entities, the shares being  
5 bought in exchange for the tradable units, and the first computer processing means processes the trades which are made, records a value for the traded shares in terms of tradable units, records changes of ownership of the shares amongst the players and  
10 records changes in holdings of tradable units amongst the players;

the first computer processing means has monitoring means for monitoring popularity of the publicly accessible sites of the entities, the  
15 popularity of a publicly accessible site being calculated as a function of how many times the data in the publicly accessible site is accessed;

the first computer processing means calculates periodically for each entity a dividend in terms of a  
20 number of tradable units, the dividend being calculated as a function of the calculated popularity of the publicly accessible site of the entity;

the first computer processing means for each entity divides the calculated dividend amongst the  
25 shares issued for the entity by adding tradable units to the tradable units holdings of the players holding the shares in the entity; and

the first computer means calculates for each player a value of aggregate holdings as an aggregate  
30 of the value of holdings of stocks and holdings of tradable units and periodically the first computer means compares the values of the holdings of the players and declares one or more winners for the

relevant time period from calculations based on values of the aggregate holdings of the players.

2. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in claim  
5 1 wherein the monitoring means for monitoring  
popularity of the publicly accessible sites of the  
entities calculates the popularity of a publicly  
accessible site as a function of how many times data  
10 in the publicly accessible site is accessed by all  
visitors to the site and the duration of access time  
each time the data is accessed.

3. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in claim  
1 wherein the monitoring means for monitoring  
15 popularity of the publicly accessible sites of the  
entities calculates the popularity of a publicly  
accessible site as a function of how many times data  
in the publicly accessible site is accessed by players  
of the game and the duration of access time each time  
20 the data is accessed by players of the game.

4. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in claim  
1 wherein the monitoring means for monitoring  
popularity of the publicly accessible sites calculates  
25 the popularity of a monitored publicly accessible site  
periodically as the product of the natural logarithm  
of the number of accesses to the data in the publicly  
accessible site by all visitors to the publicly  
accessible site in the preceding time period and the  
30 average duration in time of the accesses.

5. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in claim 1  
wherein the monitoring means for monitoring popularity  
of the publicly accessible sites calculates the  
35 popularity of a monitored publicly accessible site

periodically as the product of the natural logarithm of the number of accesses to the data in the publicly accessible site by game players in the preceding time period and the average duration in time of the  
5 accesses.

6. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the monitoring means for monitoring popularity of a publicly accessible site  
10 compares the calculated popularity of the publicly accessible site with an average popularity calculated for all the websites and generates a popularity indicator resulting from the comparison, which popularity indicator is subsequently used in the  
15 dividend calculation.

7. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the monitoring means for monitoring popularity of a publicly accessible site  
20 ranks the monitored publicly accessible sites according to their calculated popularities and generates a popularity indicator resulting from the ranking, which popularity indicator is subsequently used in the dividend calculation.

25 8. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the shares are traded on a matched bargain basis.

30 9. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the first computer processing means can display to each player, by sending signals via the telecommunications network to a remote computer processing means used by the player,  
35 game information taken from the game data stored by

the first computer processing means.

10. Apparatus as claimed in claim 9 wherein the game  
information comprises a list of entities whose shares  
5 can be traded in the game.

11. Apparatus as claimed in claim 9 or claim 10  
wherein the game information comprises historical data  
recorded by the first computer processing means  
10 concerning value of the shares of an entity and  
dividends paid in respect of shares in the entity.

12. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding  
claims wherein the first computer processing means  
15 calculates for each player an aggregate value of  
holdings of the player, the aggregate value being a  
sum of the value of the share holdings of the player  
and the value of the tradable units holdings of the  
player.

20 13. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 9 to 12  
wherein the first computer processing means displays  
to each player a statement of the aggregate value of  
the holdings of the player.

25 14. Apparatus as claimed in claims 12 or 13 wherein  
winning players are determined by the first computer  
processing means comparing the aggregate value of the  
holdings of each player with a threshold value set by  
30 the first computer processing means, the first  
computer processing means determining that a player is  
a winner when the aggregate value of the holdings of  
the player exceeds the threshold value.

35 15. Apparatus as claimed in claim 14 wherein the set

threshold value is calculated as a percentage of the aggregate value of the greatest value holdings of any player.

5     16. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding  
claims wherein a winning player is determined by the  
first computer processing means calculating percentage  
increases in the aggregate values of the holdings of  
the players and categorising as winner the player with  
10    holdings which increased greatest in value in  
percentage terms in a set time period.

17. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 14 to 16  
wherein the first computer processing means calculates  
15    for each player a figure indicative of the relative  
difference between the aggregate value of the holdings  
of the player and the value of the greatest value  
aggregate holdings held by any player and the first  
computer means includes the calculated figure in game  
20    data available to the player.

18. Apparatus as claimed in claim 12 or claim 13  
wherein the first computer processing means ranks the  
players according to the aggregate values of the  
25    holdings of the players.

19. Apparatus as claimed in claim 18 wherein the  
first computer processing means displays to the  
players a table showing the ranking of the players.  
30

20. Apparatus as claimed in claim 18 or claim 19  
wherein the first computer processing means determines  
that a player is a winner by considering the ranking  
of the player.  
35



21. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein each publicly accessible site is maintained on at least one of the plurality of remotely located computer processing means.

22. Apparatus for playing a game as claimed in any one of claim 1 to 20 wherein each publicly accessible site is maintained on the first computer processing means.

23. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22 wherein the plurality of remotely located computer processing means on which the publicly accessible sites of the entities are stored comprise part of the apparatus for playing the game and each of the said remotely located computer processing means stores computer code amongst data in a publicly accessible site of an entity with traded shares, the stored computer code operating to notify the first computer processing means via the telecommunications network of the number of times the data in a publicly accessible site is accessed and the duration of each access period.

24. Apparatus as claimed in claim 23 wherein the computer code is stored in the data in a publicly accessible site in such a way that only when a selected part of the data on the publicly accessible site is accessed will the computer code record that there has been an access to the data on the publicly accessible site which is to be notified to first computer processing means.

25. Apparatus as claimed in claim 23 or 24 wherein the computer code does not directly notify the first

processing means and instead notifies a remotely  
located tracker computer processing means, the first  
computer processing means communicating with the  
remotely located tracker computer processing means  
5 periodically to retrieve data regarding the number of  
times publicly accessible sites of the entities have  
been accessed and the duration of the access times.

26. apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 20  
10 and 21 to 25 wherein:

the telecommunications network is the Internet;  
the first computer processing means comprises a  
server hosting a game playing website;

15 the publicly accessible sites are websites hosted  
on the plurality of remotely located computer  
processing means which comprise servers remote from  
the server which hosts the game playing website; and

the plurality of remote computer processing means  
used by the players comprise personal  
20 computers with web browser software.

27. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 23 to 26  
wherein:

25 the telecommunications network is the Internet;  
the first computer processing means comprises a  
server hosting a game-playing website;

the plurality of remote computer processing means  
used by the players comprise personal computers with  
web browser software;

30 the publicly accessible sites of the entities are  
websites hosted on the plurality of remotely located  
computer processing means which comprise servers  
remote from the server which hosts the game-playing  
website; and

35 the computer code included in the data in the

publicly accessible sites of the entities comprises an HTML link or links in the websites on the servers remote from the server which hosts the game-playing website.

5

28. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22 wherein:

the telecommunications network is the Internet;

the first computer processing means comprises a server having a game playing website;

10 the publicly accessible sites are websites hosted on the server of the first computer processing means; and

the plurality of remote computer processing means used by the players comprise personal computers with  
15 web browser software.

29. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the first computer processing means comprises first and second computers remotely located  
20 from each other and connected by a telecommunications link, the first computer being connected to the telecommunications network and receiving the requests from the players and declaring winners and the search computer processing the trades which are made by the  
25 players.

30. Apparatus for playing a game substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.

30

: 76590: AMP: CTF: FUSIDOC3



24



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Application No: GB 0014010.3  
Claims searched: 1 at least

Examiner: Roland Whaite  
Date of search: 29 September 2000

**Patents Act 1977**  
**Search Report under Section 17**

**Databases searched:**

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK Cl (Ed.R): A6H (HHM, HLM)

Int Cl (Ed.7): A63H 3/00

Other: ONLINE: EPODOC JAPIO WPI

**Documents considered to be relevant:**

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
A	US 5890963      W YEN (see especially the embodiment associated with Figures 1 to 8)	

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.